



Yukon Substance Abuse Action Plan

Working Together for Healthier Communities

Discussion Draft

October 2005

The Yukon Substance Abuse Action Plan responds to the harms caused by alcohol and other drug abuse, by offering Yukon-based solutions. It is informed by current research on substance use and abuse patterns in the Territory and by input from front-line workers, community leaders and concerned citizens who attended the Yukon Substance Abuse Summit in June 2005.

The key characteristics of the Action Plan are flexibility, sustainability and community involvement. The Action Plan must effectively address the diverse needs of the Yukon population therefore, the programs and initiatives of the Action Plan reflect different models of prevention and intervention that are sensitive to culture, age and gender. In addition, because there are significant health and social costs associated with substance abuse, the Action Plan provides a strong commitment to the reduction of legal and illegal substances that compromise the health and well-being of Yukoners.

The Action Plan will succeed to the extent that it has the active support of all sectors of the Yukon community.

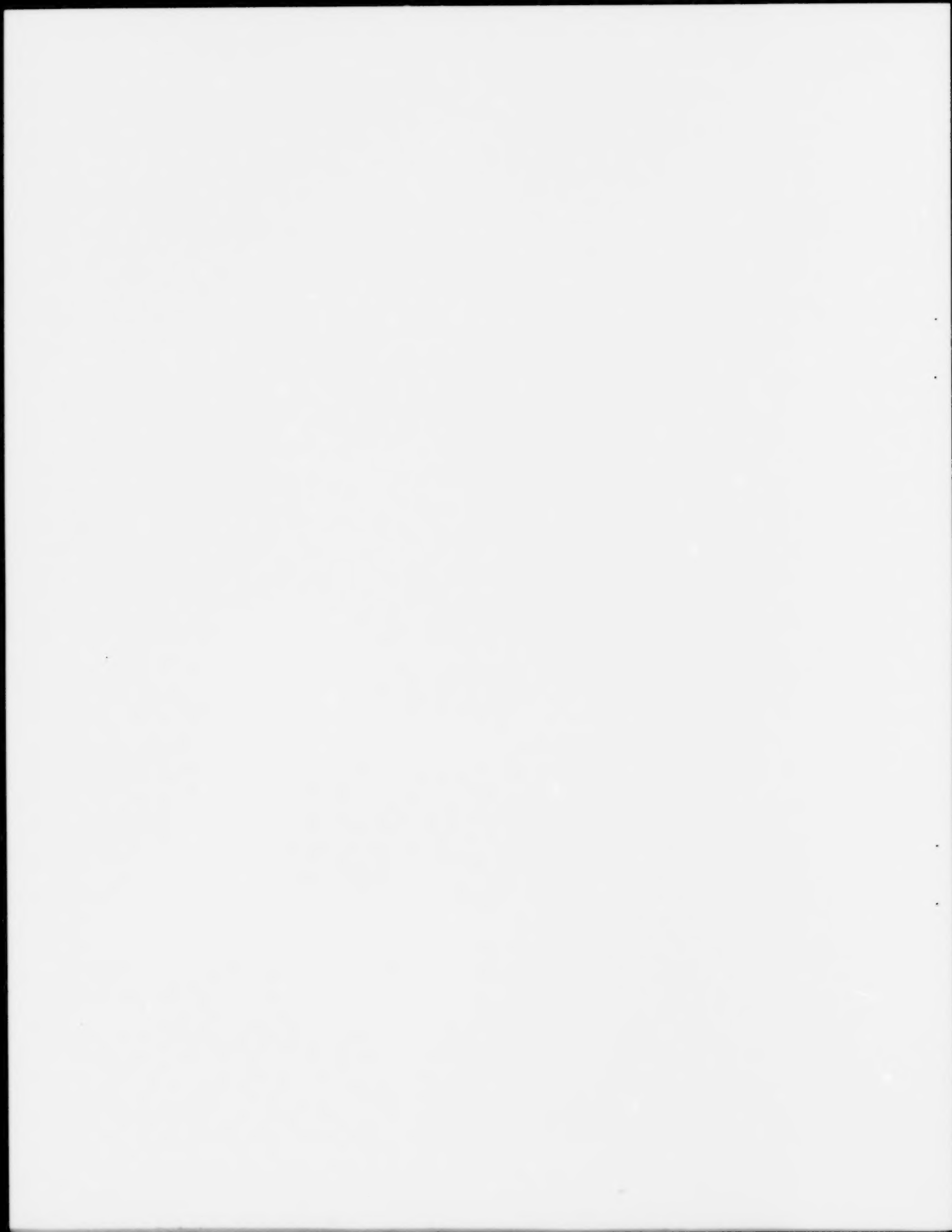
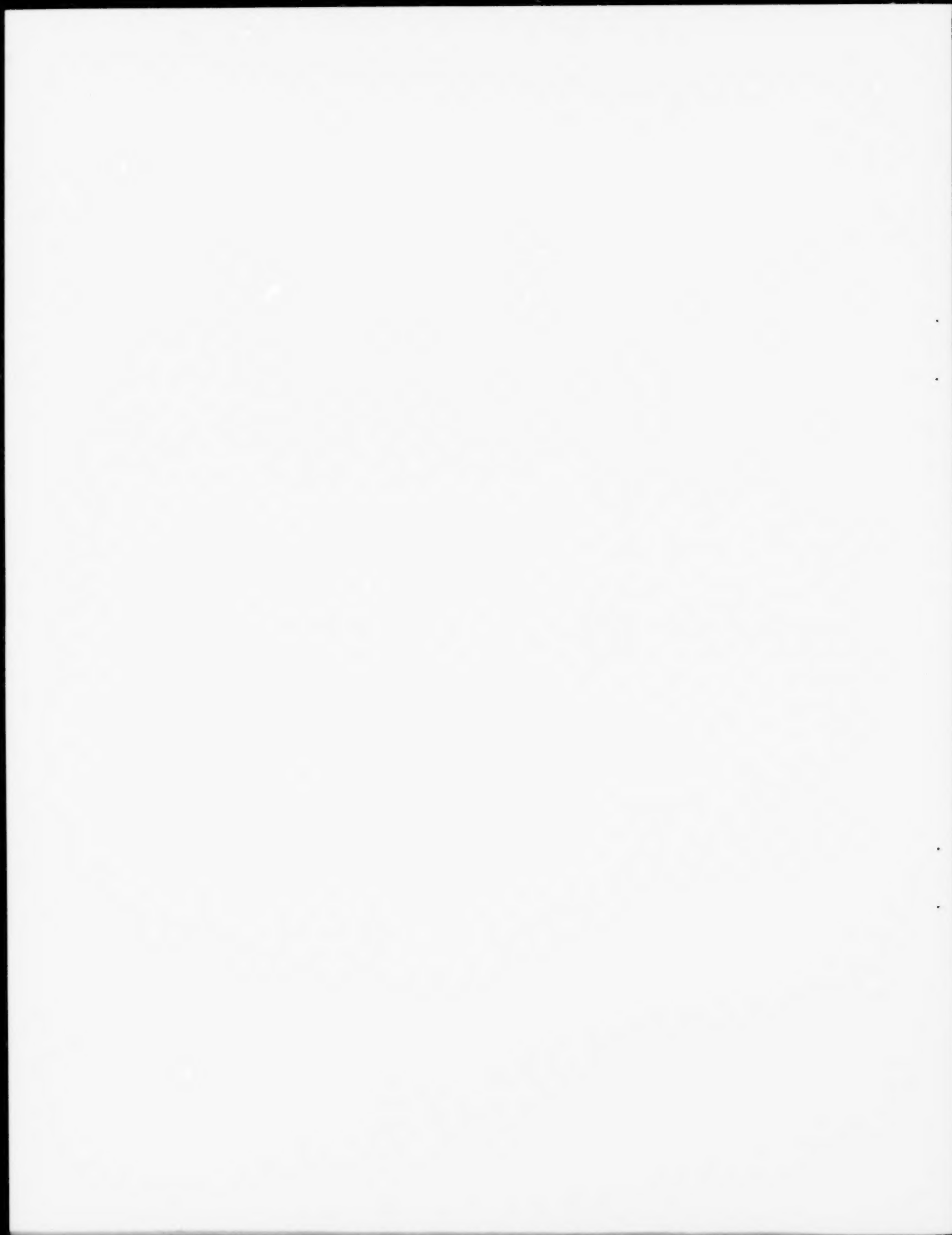


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Message from the Premier

Our government is committed to a robust economy and healthy, vibrant communities. We envision a Territory in which individuals in all communities live healthy and prosperous lives and are able to pursue their dreams and aspirations. We are committed to working with Yukoners to build strong communities that support individuals and their families. This is our hope for today and for the future.

Substance abuse touches most aspects of life in Yukon. It undermines the health of individuals and communities. It leads to illness, addiction, accidents and violence. It creates psychological harm among those who are addicted.

Substance abuse is often associated with crime and social disorder that diminishes the quality of life for all Yukoners. There is a strong link between substance abuse and family violence, which adversely affects the quality of life of many women and children.

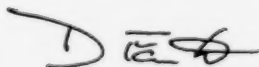
Substance abuse also harms the economy — substantial resources are spent on combating the illegal drug trade and on enforcement. There are also economic harms to individual users and society such as costs of decreased and lost productivity, workplace accidents and increased use of the health care system.

Our Yukon Substance Abuse Action Plan is a concerted effort to combat substance abuse in the Territory. The Action Plan is a framework document that will guide how our government responds to drug and alcohol abuse. The Action Plan focuses on increasing public awareness of substance abuse and, through education and prevention efforts, lessening the harms it causes to individuals and their families. The Action Plan recognizes that treatment will be most effective when it is accessible, flexible and targeted to those who require it most. Strong enforcement is also a key to reducing the availability of illegal drugs.

The Action Plan also recognizes that government must work in partnership with communities, First Nations and other levels of government in a co-ordinated fashion. The Action Plan will provide further support to dedicated health care, education and justice professionals who are currently working in our communities.

I would like to thank all Yukoners who provided input into this Action Plan. This is a draft Action Plan and comments and feedback are welcome. It is by working together that we can create healthier communities. It is my hope that we can make the Yukon a place where every individual has the best possible chance of living in a healthy and prosperous community, free of addiction and substance abuse.

Yours sincerely,



Dennis Fentie
Premier



Background

Substance abuse affects all communities in Canada and Yukoners' use of drugs and alcohol is similar to the rest of Canada. The Yukon differs, however, from the rest of the country in some important ways concerning substance use and an Action Plan must take these differences into account.

First, as a northern region, First Nation people comprise about 25% of the Yukon population and the Yukon consists of many First Nation and non-First Nation cultures and traditions. Solutions to substance abuse must reflect the cultural diversity of the Yukon and, in particular, First Nation cultures and traditions.

Second, the population of the Territory is small — about 33,000 people. This small population, and the geographical isolation of many communities, influences both how substance abuse surfaces in Yukon communities and how the Yukon government can respond to those who require assistance.

For example:

- ▶ Individuals with alcohol or drug-related problems are likely to have a greater impact upon the community as a whole. The smaller the community, the greater the impact.
- ▶ A benefit of having a small population is that solutions can be designed to address specific situations. Social service providers have more opportunities to understand why some individuals or communities are more prone to substance abuse, and, more importantly, to develop ways of responding to these individuals and communities to address their particular needs.
- ▶ The small population makes it possible to monitor the impacts of policies and programs designed to alleviate substance-related problems and where to make appropriate adjustments.

These differences suggest that while the Yukon Government can learn from the experience of other jurisdictions, its policy responses and programs must be tailored to the unique features of life in the Yukon.

A Snapshot of Substance Abuse in Yukon

In 2005, the Government of Yukon conducted a survey on the use of alcohol and other drugs. The following are some of the highlights of the survey:

- ▶ Yukoners as a whole use alcohol and other drugs in much the same way as do those living in the rest of Canada.
- ▶ Most Yukoners drink alcohol with no permanent negative consequences.
- ▶ Rates of cannabis use are lower in the 10 provinces than in the Yukon. The rates are not available for either Northwest Territories or Nunavut.
- ▶ Many Yukoners find it easy to access illegal drugs such as cannabis, heroin and cocaine.

The survey also included a special sample of "high risk" individuals in order to assess the patterns of consequences of substance abuse among individuals who are more likely to suffer negative health consequences as a result of using alcohol and drugs.

- ▶ Higher risk respondents tended to be heavy and frequent drinkers and multiple drug users. They reported drinking an average of more than 10 drinks on a typical drinking occasion and these occasions occurred more than once a week.
- ▶ Alcohol is the most frequently misused substance but there has been a recent increase in the use of illegal drugs.
- ▶ Higher risk individuals used a range of illegal drugs, with cannabis and cocaine/crack reported most frequently.
- ▶ Compared to respondents in the general population, high risk respondents reported high rates of harm to themselves and from others as a result of substance use, indicating that self-harm and victimization are frequently experienced in situations where heavy drinking and drug use is frequent.

This snapshot shows that substance abuse in the Yukon is not uniform. Rates of substance abuse in the general population are similar to the rest of Canada. What distinguishes the Yukon is the presence of a core group of high risk individuals who consume alcohol and drugs at rates much higher than similar high risk users in the rest of Canada.

Strategies designed to combat this issue must be flexible enough to respond to a diversity of needs. A continuum of care approach is necessary in order to proactively address substance abuse experienced by individuals and communities.

Surveys provide valuable data on the extent of substance abuse in the general population, as well as in the high risk population, but they do not always address the more complicated issues of why some individuals are more affected by substance abuse than others; and, the effects of substance abuse on communities and how we can effectively respond to their addictions.

Surveys also do not capture the public's concerns about alcohol and drug abuse in their community. For example, when surveyors talked to a special sample of "high risk" individuals, they were told that marijuana use is widespread. Despite this, it is the increased use of crack cocaine that seems to be responsible for the recent escalation of concerns about community safety.

Yukon Substance Abuse Summit

In June 2005, the Government of Yukon hosted the Yukon Substance Abuse Summit in Whitehorse. About 200 participants from throughout the Territory listened to presentations and held roundtable discussions.

The participants included community leaders, law enforcement and justice officials, counsellors, social workers, addictions and medical service providers, educators, representatives of non-government organizations (NGOs) and medical and health services. Most of the Summit participants work in service delivery positions that bring them into contact with alcohol and drug problems on a daily basis.

The content of the Action Plan relies in a large part upon the discussions and suggestions that these individuals shared during the Summit.

The public is particularly concerned about the use of crack cocaine and drug houses in residential neighbourhoods and small communities. These situations create significant unease, fear and distrust, in great part because of the addictive nature of crack cocaine, the volatile behaviour of people under its influence, the criminal element involved in its sale and distribution, and the criminal acts engaged in to support the addiction, such as breaking and entering and stealing from family members.

Delegates to the Yukon Substance Abuse Summit recognized that substance abuse is intimately linked to unhealthy lifestyles, which can be passed on intergenerationally. They described a range of problems associated with substance abuse that often have permanent consequences: illiteracy, fetal alcohol spectrum disorder (FASD), problems within schools, poor nutrition, sexual abuse and child abuse and neglect. People who misuse drugs and alcohol are often both the perpetrators of harm to others as well as victims of harm from others. There is a strong link between alcohol and drug abuse and family violence.

These serious and complicated issues are often rooted in a family's history of violence, trauma or discrimination. Furthermore, it is recognized that many First Nation families have been, and continue to be affected by cultural dislocation and abuse associated with the legacy of colonization and the residential school system.

Excessive use of alcohol and other drugs is not the sole cause of problems for individuals, families, neighbourhoods and communities in the Yukon. However, strong statistical and anecdotal evidence suggests that substance abuse contributes to these problems.

Did you know

- ▶ Yukoners' consumption of alcohol is similar to that of other Canadians
- ▶ In 2004/2005, there were 1,200 admissions to the Detox Centre in Whitehorse.
- ▶ Yukon has the third highest rate of interpersonal violent offences in the country, after Nunavut and the Northwest Territories. The Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics (CCJS) estimated in 1999 that in cases of violent crime, the victim believed that in 51% of the physical assaults and 48% of the sexual assaults, the incident was related to the perpetrator's use of alcohol or drugs.
- ▶ It costs \$294.75 per day to incarcerate an inmate in the Whitehorse Correctional Centre.
- ▶ Between August 2003 and December 2004, there were 8 deaths in the Yukon that resulted in murder charges. Almost all of these deaths (85%) involved one or more of the participants using alcohol or drugs of some kind.
- ▶ In 2004/2005, 72 Yukoners took the 28-day residential treatment program offered by the Government of Yukon, Alcohol and Drug Services Branch, and 445 people received outpatient services. Ten participated in some type of prevention services ---- at either workshops, in-services or consultations. This does not include individuals who have received treatment through NNADAP (National Native Alcohol and Drug Abuse Program).
- ▶ Although reliable data is difficult to obtain, it is suspected that a significant percentage of the Yukon's population of offenders and victims suffer from Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder. They are also at high risk to suffer from alcohol or drug abuse.
- ▶ If you ask Yukoners, they will say that the Yukon has experienced a noticeable increase in drug trafficking, with an influx of hard drugs such as crack cocaine and methamphetamine. In 2004, the Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics (CCJS) reported that despite a decline in rates between 1980 and 1992, the rate of police-reported drug offences increased by 42% in Canada between 1992 and 2002.
- ▶ Health and Social Services budgets \$3 million per year for detox services, outpatient and in-patient treatment services, outreach services to communities, education and training for alcohol workers and other professionals through Alcohol and Drug Services. It also spends \$300,000 for programming in Youth Justice.
- ▶ The hidden or indirect costs of alcohol and drug abuse are staggering. In 1994, the Yukon Bureau of Statistics released a report that stated that the direct and indirect cost of **just** alcohol abuse in Yukon was \$13.8 million dollars. In 2005 dollars, this is \$16.5 million dollars. The total costs of drug abuse in Yukon have never been calculated.

Purpose and Scope

The Yukon Substance Abuse Action Plan provides a framework for policies and programs designed to reduce harm from the abuse of alcohol and other drugs. The Action Plan provides options for working with individuals who abuse alcohol and drugs, addresses the needs of their families, and provides meaningful ways for community members to make a positive contribution. The Action Plan explicitly recognizes the need for the reduction of both supply and demand of alcohol and other drugs.

The Action Plan has been developed after careful consideration of the input received from delegates to the Yukon Substance Abuse Summit. The Action Plan is a framework document that will help guide the Government of Yukon's policy responses to problematic substance use in the Territory over the course of the next five years. This is a "living document" that will be reviewed regularly.

The focus of the Action Plan is on *problematic substance use* and its effects:

- ▶ "Problematic substance use" refers to use of alcohol or other drugs which have negative consequences for the user's physical, mental or social well-being. It also refers to substance use which has negative consequences for people other than the user.
- ▶ The terms "substance" or "alcohol and other drugs" refer to any psychoactive material that is used for non-medical purposes or misused for medical purposes. This includes alcohol, tobacco, prescription drugs, over-the-counter medications, amphetamines, illegal drugs, solvents and inhalants.

The Action Plan includes two key components:

- ▶ co-ordinated service delivery among all service providers (government and non-government); and,
- ▶ a continuum of services that responds to the unique circumstances of individuals and communities.

Co-ordinated Service Delivery

For the most part, service providers operate at the *community level* with clients, within their agencies and with agencies in the community that may address the different needs of clients. For example, the police, the courts, a social worker and an alcohol and drug counsellor may be able to provide co-ordinated help to the same individual or the same family. Included in community services are culturally-relevant First Nation options for prevention and treatment. In most instances, particular services and interventions must address age and gender characteristics of the clients in order to be effective.

The Government of Yukon plays a key role in the Action Plan. The government serves as:

- ▶ a service provider – providing direct services relating to harm reduction, prevention and education, treatment and enforcement;
- ▶ an investor – providing funding either directly to communities and NGOs or by ensuring that government services are adequately staffed and funded;
- ▶ a facilitator – providing the tools for communities to deal with substance abuse issues (convening meetings, providing technical assistance, assisting with community planning and/or drafting proposals to help the community find funding); and
- ▶ a leader – working with other levels of government such as Yukon First Nations, other provinces and territories and the federal government to advance innovative policies to combat substance abuse.

It is important to recognize the complexities and challenges that exist as a result of the many and complex cross-jurisdictional responsibilities and capacities. For example, the Government of Canada, Government of Yukon and each First Nation government have responsibility for some alcohol and drug programming.

There is no shortage of potential partnerships and collaborations in this area.

Continuum of Services

The Action Plan will address new ways of delivering services that respond to the unique needs and circumstances of the people they are designed to serve. In short, services must be flexible and must be delivered at the time and in places that are easily accessible by those looking for help.

By having a continuum of services, services can be effectively targeted to individuals and communities who are most in need, particularly marginalized populations that experience barriers to services due to poverty, homelessness or geographical isolation.

Guiding Principles

The following guiding principles provide a framework for the Action Plan. They reflect the criteria by which programs, policies, protocols and procedures can be measured to assess the extent to which they support the overall direction of the Action Plan.

I. Community Health Perspective

The central goal of the Action Plan is to promote and protect community health. Policies will be most effective if they support and are supported by education, prevention and enforcement measures. Health promotion and prevention strategies must respond to the social, health, criminogenic and economic risk factors associated with substance abuse problems. Strategies will be more effective to the extent that they involve community partnerships.

Programs and policies should be designed to minimize the harm experienced by individuals and communities by actions associated with alcohol and drug abuse and drug trafficking.

II. Comprehensive Policy Approach

Substance abuse should be viewed as a symptom of social and individual problems, as well as a cause of these problems. Substance abuse interacts with personal, social and societal factors such as poverty and unemployment, family dysfunction, discrimination and personal values.

Multidisciplinary responses are required as the problems are often multi-faceted. For example, the co-ordination of medical, social and judicial actions will often constitute an appropriate and effective action.

Policies on substance abuse will be most effective when determinants of health are taken into account. The less resources available, the more vulnerable the person is to harm from substance abuse. A comprehensive policy encompasses four themes: harm reduction, prevention and education; treatment; and enforcement/justice.

III. Partnerships and Integration

Government interventions are only a partial solution to problematic substance use. A solution to substance abuse requires on-going partnerships between the territorial government, the federal government, First Nations, municipalities and communities.

Government may be the lead organization for some issues; for other interventions, other partners may take the lead with government playing a supportive role. Policies and programs should be integrated across government departments and between government and other agencies.

IV. Evidence-Based Interventions

Policies and programs for the control, prevention and treatment of problematic substance use should be based on objective, scientifically validated information that is collected and analyzed in a timely, on-going manner. In addition, local knowledge and "anecdotal evidence" must be taken into account. The evidence provided through community participation and the knowledge of front-line workers is an essential part of developing "evidence-based" interventions.

Policies and programs should be subject to on-going evaluation concerning their effectiveness for reducing harm from alcohol and drug problems. Treatment programs and other interventions will vary depending on the type of substance, client characteristics, social supports (e. g. family, peers, other programs) and community characteristics.

V. Culturally Sensitive

Policies and programs should be culturally sensitive, especially in cases where First Nations' experiences, values and goals are concerned. They must be sensitive to diverse cultural values and perspectives.

The development and delivery of programs should incorporate the perspectives and values of the populations they are intended to serve. For example, programming should, where possible, incorporate cultural traditions, stories, traditional healing, involve Elders, and follow direction from local First Nation expertise.

VI. Gender Sensitive and Age Appropriate

Policies and programs for the prevention and treatment of problematic substance use should, at the very minimum, be sensitive to differences in gender and age.

For example, research in other jurisdictions identifies a number of barriers to treatment for women, including early identification by professionals; child care and access to children's services; residential programs that can accommodate mothers and their children; transportation to and from addictions services; safe, drug-free housing; and, services that are sensitive to the needs of underserved populations.

Children in families with substance abuse problems are particularly vulnerable to harm in all aspects of their lives. The Action Plan places the well-being of children as a priority.

Policies and programs should be age appropriate. Data indicates that youth are at particular risk of abusing alcohol and drugs and are vulnerable to harms from other substance abusers. For example, young women tend to be at higher risk for sexually transmitted diseases and unwanted pregnancies by trading sexual relations for drugs. Younger people also consume a wider variety of illegal drugs than do middle-aged or older people.

VII. Cost Effectiveness

Policies and programs related to the control, prevention and treatment of alcohol and other drug abuse problems should be evaluated for their cost effectiveness. All policies and programs should be systematically evaluated and progress should be routinely monitored.

Cost effectiveness should also be enhanced by effective partnerships with the private sector, non-government organizations and self-help groups. Policies and programs should be co-ordinated to avoid duplication of effort.

Strategic Directions

The Action Plan focuses on the following four strategic directions:

1. Harm Reduction
2. Prevention and Education
3. Treatment
4. Enforcement

These strategic directions reflect the areas on which the Government of Yukon intends to focus its efforts over the course of the next three to five years.

1. Harm Reduction

Harm reduction strategies are intended to reduce the health and social problems associated with the abuse of alcohol and other drugs among individuals, families and communities.

For example, if a treatment goal is abstinence and if, after treatment, the individual uses less of the drug and/or uses the drug less often, the treatment is considered to be successful. More importantly, the individual and his or her helpers are more likely to be supported after "relapse" in a harm-reduction approach.

Harm Reduction Action Items

Community Harm Reduction Fund

The Department of Health and Social Services will establish a fund that will provide financial assistance to communities who wish to deliver projects focused on aftercare treatment, harm reduction and/or prevention.

The fund will be flexible and easily accessible. In most cases, a matching contribution of some percentage would be expected. This would allow communities to undertake initiatives at a pace and time they are comfortable with.

Learning How to Help Kids with FASD in Schools

The Department of Education will enhance its existing "FASD Project" that offers training and support for educators.

These enhancements will focus on developing a teacher training model and support manual, enhancing mentors and training school-based support persons, and, developing a culturally-relevant Grade 1-12 curriculum on FASD for Yukon students.

No Fixed Address Outreach Van

The Department of Health and Social Services will provide support for the No Fixed Address Outreach Van.

The No Fixed Address Outreach Van is a collaborative project that for the past three years has provided much needed services to children, youth and adults, both First Nation and non-First Nation. The "van" brings a variety of services including safety and support services (food, clothing and blankets), counselling, education and referral services and health services to individuals on the street.

Responsible Server Training

The Yukon Liquor Corporation will develop a "self-directed" version of the existing "Be A Responsible Server" (B.A.R.S.) training program.

The program focuses on server responsibilities, recognizing signs of intoxication and ways to identify and manage difficult or intoxicated patrons. It also provides information on methods to deal with minors, over-serving and overcrowding. It will be available electronically (CD-ROM and/or on-line).

Substance Abuse Management (SAM) Certification

The Department of Justice will increase drug/alcohol awareness and train staff who work with offenders in communities or at the Whitehorse Correctional Centre to deliver the SAM Program.

The SAM program is an introduction to substance abuse issues and will provide staff with the opportunity to consider the effect that substance abuse has on the lives of offenders.

Support for High Risk Young Women

The Women's Directorate will establish a fund to assist NGOs and First Nations to implement harm reduction initiatives for young women living in high risk situations.

Projects will focus on young women who are or may be experiencing sexualized assault, homelessness, family violence, mental health issues, HIV/AIDS or other health risks, and/or teen pregnancy.

2. Prevention and Education

The Action Plan proposes prevention strategies that promote healthy behaviours and maximize protective factors and human potential. The goal of prevention and education is to build healthy communities whose citizens are committed to the well-being of all who live there. Prevention initiatives may include school programs that identify, monitor and provide support to children living in households where substance abuse is occurring; actions that prevent or delay the onset of drug use; and, actions that reduce the harms resulting from drug use.

Prevention efforts may target groups with risks for different kinds of harm, such as youth and/or the elderly.

Prevention and Education Action Items

Public Education Campaign

The Government of Yukon will develop a public awareness campaign about the harms associated with substance abuse, including a more targeted campaign aimed at youth and focused on strategies that would delay the "age of first use".

This campaign will provide information to the public about the effects of alcohol and other drugs and how to recognize different drugs, information on current research, and options. It could also address questions such as how to recognize substance abuse, particularly for some of the new and emerging substances, and the latest research on effective treatment.

The targeted campaign for youth will focus on delaying the "age of first use". Research indicates that the earlier a youth starts to drink outside of strictly controlled circumstances, or experiment with drugs, the greater the risk that he or she will have problems with substance use in the future.

Aboriginal Shield

The RCMP will implement a pilot project called *Aboriginal Shield*. *Aboriginal Shield* is a substance abuse prevention initiative designed specifically for Aboriginal youth.

This initiative will complement existing substance abuse education programs. Police officers will use a culturally-specific package to educate Aboriginal youth about substance abuse issues. The four teaching modules cover Aboriginal culture, substance abuse, prevention and informed and responsible decision making.

Alcohol & Drug Education in Public Schools

The Department of Education will continue to provide programs such as *Second Step*, the *Real Game*, *Steps to Respect*, and *Baby Think it Over* in Yukon public schools, and it will implement a new curriculum focussed on "health and career education" for students from kindergarten to Grade 9.

This new curriculum includes information on such topics as distinguishing safe and unsafe substances, recognizing unsafe substances, harm from unsafe substances, refusing and avoiding substances, negative effects of misusing substances, influences of substance misuse, strategies for healthy choices, and consequences of substance misuse.

Be Prepared to Talk to Your Children about Drinking

The Yukon Liquor Corporation will publish *Be Prepared to Talk to Your Children about Drinking*.

This booklet is designed to help parents discuss alcohol and alcohol-related issues with their children. It targets parents of children between 8 and 18 years. It is written in a "how-to" format and offers examples of common situations, as well as how parents may approach some situations related to youth drinking. It will be distributed to all households in rural Yukon communities, at central locations in Whitehorse, and it will be available on the Yukon Liquor Corporation's website.

Community Planning & Development

The Department of Justice will add more resources to support communities to develop plans to identify and combat social issues.

This could include resources to facilitate community meetings and planning, assistance to identify the particular factors that contribute to substance abuse in their community, and funding to assist the communities in getting started on aspects of their plan.

Counselling for Kids

The Department of Justice, in collaboration with the Department of Health and Social Services, will develop a program called *Counselling for Kids* that will provide counselling services to children in homes where there has been incidences of violence.

The goal of this program is to help children find constructive ways of responding to the violence so that they will be less likely to use alcohol or drugs as a coping mechanism.

Community Training in Addiction Issues

Alcohol and Drug Services and the Women's Directorate will collaborate to increase the amount of training offered to communities.

Training will be offered to communities in the area of addictions and women's issues, providing counselling and how to provide support and aftercare. Training will be available to anyone interested in addictions, including First Nation employees, community members, community health workers and nurses, physicians, justice workers and other interested persons.

DARE Program

The RCMP, in collaboration with the Department of Education, will expand their offering of the *DARE* program to Yukon schools.

DARE (Drug Abuse Resistance Program) is a drug awareness and prevention program for Grade 5 students. It is delivered by RCMP officers in schools and it is designed to complement the *Second Step* program.

Healthy Lifestyles & Work Experience Project

The Government of Yukon will collaborate with federal government departments and agencies to develop a community-based program that will encourage healthy lifestyles, mentoring opportunities and work experiences for youth and young adults.

Resource Directory for Yukon Communities

The Department of Justice will collaborate with other government departments, First Nations and communities to develop an inventory of programs, services and resources related to substance abuse and the social supports that are available in each Yukon community.

Support for Students at Risk

The Department of Education will collaborate with other departments, non-government agencies and other resource personnel to increase the availability of counsellors and other resources that can help students who have substance abuse problems or who are at risk of substance abuse.

Women's Health Forum

The Women's Directorate will host a women's health forum in March 2006 in Whitehorse.

This forum will focus on "women and health" and will include education sessions on women and substance abuse.

3. Treatment

Treatment services normally include a continuum of interventions and treatment options that will help individuals deal with their addictions problems, improve their health and prevent the reoccurrence of similar problems in the future. There should be a range of services, including pre-treatment programs, aftercare and on-going counselling support.

Treatment Action Items**Expanded Outreach Services**

The Department of Health and Social Services will add additional Outreach Workers to the Alcohol and Drug Services staff. These Outreach Workers will assist communities to develop addiction action plans and to design and implement programs.

This will be an expansion of the current outreach work being done. If requested, these staff will be on-site in communities when programs are delivered and they could assist with program delivery.

Problem Solving Court

The Department of Justice will develop a specialized therapeutic court to deal with offenders with drug or alcohol addictions, symptoms of FASD, and/or mental health issues.

The court will provide a comprehensive treatment plan that will include judicial supervision, substance abuse treatment, random and frequent drug testing, incentives and sanctions, clinical case management, and social services support.

Telehealth Addictions Counselling

The Department of Health and Social Services will expand the Telehealth Addictions Counselling service to additional communities by adding additional counselling positions and the necessary hardware to link to the Yukon Telehealth Network.

The Yukon Telehealth Network uses videoconferencing technology to provide health-related services to a number of Yukon communities. This innovative approach has proven to be successful in providing the necessary services in the person's home community while preserving their privacy.

Access to a 24 Hour Substance Abuse Crisis Line

The Departments of Justice and Health and Social Services are working to conclude an agreement with British Columbia that would allow Yukoners to access their 24 hour -7 day a week Alcohol and Drug Information and Referral Service using a toll-free "1- 800" number.

The Alcohol and Drug Information and Referral Service has addiction support workers available at all times to respond to inquiries about alcohol and drug use and abuse. When the agreement is completed, Yukoners will be able to call the "1-800" line at any time to obtain counselling services or information about the services and resources available in the Yukon.

4. Enforcement

Enforcement consists of a broad range of activities carried out by regulatory agencies, licensing authorities, police, the courts and other sectors in the criminal justice system. The goal is to reduce the production and supply of illegal drugs and to control and regulate legal drugs through a co-ordinated approach. Enforcement should also focus on responding to the social harms associated with substance abuse.

Reducing the supply of illegal substances in our communities is a shared responsibility with the federal government. The Government of Yukon works with the RCMP to ensure that drug laws and the *Criminal Code* are enforced effectively.

Enforcement Action Items

Community Enforcement Campaign

The Department of Justice will work with the RCMP to develop a communications campaign designed to help Yukoners gain a better understanding of how they can assist the RCMP in its enforcement work.

The RCMP must rely on community support and assistance to make the Yukon safe. This campaign would focus on providing information to the public about how to report incidents to the RCMP, what information would be useful, and when anonymous tips can be given and how they can help. There would also be information about Crime Stoppers, "tip lines", and other means of relaying information to the RCMP.

Getting Tough on Drug Dealers

The Government of Yukon will continue to work with other provinces and territories to urge the federal government to reduce the availability of illegal drugs by increasing the penalties for their manufacturing and trafficking.

Reduce the Availability of Drug Precursors

The Government of Yukon will continue to work with other provinces and territories to call upon the federal government to reduce the availability of illegal drugs by strengthening the regulation of chemicals used to produce drugs such as GHB (the "date rape" drug) and methamphetamine.

Restricting Access to Certain Cold Medicines

The Government of Yukon will continue to work with other provinces and territories to reduce the availability of the precursors of methamphetamine by working to move cold medications that contain single-source pseudoephedrine behind pharmacy counters.

Reducing Bootlegging

The Department of Justice will initiate discussions with the Yukon Liquor Corporation and the RCMP to explore options to reduce the ability of bootleggers to operate and to assist communities to deal with bootlegging in their communities.

Safer Communities Legislation

The Department of Justice will explore the possibility of developing legislation, that would improve community safety by targeting and, if necessary, shutting down residential and commercial buildings that are used for illegal activities such as producing, selling or using illegal drugs or the unlawful sale and consumption of alcohol.

Secure Identification Cards

The Department of Community Services will upgrade and/or replace the existing Yukon driver's license with a new card that has more sophisticated security features. This will make licenses more difficult to falsify and duplicate. At the same time, the Department will create general identification cards to replace the existing liquor identification cards.

This project will assist licensed premises and liquor stores to more easily identify minors and refuse service.

Targeted Enforcement

The Yukon Liquor Corporation will, where specific concerns are identified, coordinate inspection "blitzes" of a number of licensed operations.

The "inspection blitz" will focus on checking for intoxicated persons or checking for minors. The inspections will be done in cooperation with the RCMP.

Looking Forward

This Action Plan is intended to guide government policy for responding to problematic substance abuse over the next five years. The initiatives outlined in this plan are intended to complement the on-going efforts of government, First Nations, NGOs, communities groups and others. Some of the new initiatives outlined in this plan will be implemented in the immediate future; others will take more time to develop.

The Action Plan is intended to be a "living document". It will be reviewed and adjusted on a regular basis as best practices evolve and as our knowledge of "what works" increases.

An important step in the process of "reviewing and renewing" the Action Plan will be to determine whether any of the actions we have proposed are making a difference. Has the quality of life increased in Yukon communities? Are fewer people suffering harm as a result of alcohol and drug use? Is the health and well-being of chronic, high-risk drug and alcohol users increasing?

The following measurable outcomes could be used to assess the overall effectiveness of the Action Plan.

The Action Plan will be successful if:

- ▶ the number of individuals at particularly high risk to experience harmful consequences of drug use, including alcohol, is reduced;
- ▶ the health and well-being of individuals who have substance abuse problems is increased;
- ▶ the age at which youth first drink alcohol outside of strictly controlled circumstances, and begin to experiment with drugs, increases;
- ▶ the number of heavy drinkers (five or more drinks on one occasion) in the Yukon decreases;
- ▶ the availability and use of illegal drugs is decreased;
- ▶ support for innovative, successful treatment interventions is increased; and
- ▶ the health, social and economic costs associated with problematic substance use are reduced.

A successful response to problematic substance use requires a clear and comprehensive plan and a commitment to invest the resources required to fully implement it.

A successful response to problematic substance abuse also requires a shared vision that allows all partners — governments, First Nations, community agencies and others — to actively participate in its implementation. By working together we can make our communities healthier.

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